

## **Part V**

# **Training Senior Civil Servants in Other Countries**

# 16

## Colombia

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### Introduction

Colombia, located in northwest South America, has a population of 46 million people and is divided into 32 departments (states) and the capital district of Bogota. Colombia has a long history of civilian rule and control over the armed forces, experiencing only three military governments since its independence from Spain in 1820. Civilian rule came after a long period, dubbed *La Violencia*, triggered by the assassination of Liberal leader Jorge Eliezer Gaitan on April 9, 1948, an event known as the *Bogotazo*. For ten years, tensions between the two traditional parties, *Liberales* and *Conservadores* escalated, spreading to much of the country. To quell the violence, in December of 1957, Colombians adopted a referendum for consociational democracy—*Frente Nacional*, a power-sharing mechanism in which the two main political parties agreed to rotate presidential terms and share bureaucratic positions equally (Dix 1980).

Although free elections were re-established in 1974, sharing bureaucratic appointments endured until 1986, when the Liberal president Virgilio Barco abolished the practice (Pearce 1992). Subsequent administrations varied greatly in terms of sharing bureaucratic appointments with other parties. In 2004, Colombia adopted Law 909 to rule and oversee the entrance to and mobility of one's "administrative career" in the public sector, the regulatory duties to be performed by the Comisión Nacional del Servicio Civil (CNSC). Nevertheless, the law has not been fully implemented because powerful political groups have resorted to freelancers and provisional and interim appointments to avoid compliance (Ortega Suescún 2011). In 2009, the Court ratified the administrative career as the only channel to get access to the public service (Sentence C-588). However, through legislation,<sup>1</sup> the Congress continues to grant rights to freelancers, and provisional and interim appointees.

Despite its long history of democratic rule, Colombia continues to face violence because of the presence of leftist guerrillas and right-wing

paramilitary groups. According to Pizarro (1992) and Molano (1992), poverty, inequality, the geographic and social-economic landscape, and not adopting agrarian reform led to the emergence of guerrilla groups in the 1950s. In 1990, Colombia signed a peace agreement with three small guerrilla groups as well as with the M-19 (Movimiento M-19), which then became a political party (Mondragón 2004). In 1991, Colombians opted for a new constitution, which removed barriers restricting political participation, and adopted new electoral rules that favored the proliferation of myriad small political parties (Moreno 2005; Cardenas et al. 2006). Meanwhile, a flawed counternarcotics strategy helped Pablo Escobar of the Medellín drug cartel and the Orejuela brothers from the Cali drug cartel to become key players in Colombian politics.

In 1998, President Andrés Pastrana tried but failed to negotiate a peace with the Colombia's two guerrilla organizations—ELN (Ejército Popular de Liberación) and FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia). The failure brought Alvaro Uribe to power in 2002. Uribe adopted a heavy-handed position against the guerrillas, and was reelected president in 2006 to continue his crackdown. Under the Uribe administration, a woman was appointed for the first time as minister of defense, and other key cabinet and independent agencies were occupied by women. In 2010, Uribe's former minister of defense, Juan Manuel Santos, won election as president. Like Pastrana, Santos is striving to negotiate peace with the FARC, but as of December 2013, Colombia still struggles under the presence of paramilitary forces and the well-armed ELN and FARC.

In the next section, we provide a brief sociological/societal and political background. We then develop a profile of civil servant training by reviewing the demand for training in public organizations and training programs offered by both public and private educational institutions. We adopt a qualitative methodological approach. First, we provide interviews with key actors in the Colombian government related to training and education programs for civil servants; we identify the characteristics of existing programs or the actions being taken to train top officials, and then we explore the flaws and limitations in the approach. Secondly, we undertake an extensive review of official and academic documents dealing with the issue of training of the higher echelons of the government.

## **Sociological/Societal Background**

Despite relative political and economic stability, the Colombian government still faces security and social challenges. The long-lasting internal conflict with drug traffickers, leftist guerrillas, and right-wing paramilitary movements has had enormous costs in terms of lives and productivity. Not surprisingly, the State Fragility Index puts Colombia as the second most fragile state in the Americas, after Haiti (Marshall and Cole

2011). In terms of delivery of social programs, Colombia's performance has been extremely modest: 45.5 percent of its population is below the poverty line, and Colombia remains the most unequal country in Latin America after Haiti (Gini coefficient 55.9 in 2010) and the eighth most unequal worldwide.

In the last decade, Colombia has seen a vibrant civil society, contributing to both the adoption of strong laws in favor of women's rights and the creation of institutions that support gender equity (Ruiz 2012). In 2011, for example, law 1475 established a 30 percent minimum quota for women candidates in all elections (Ruiz 2012), and the same percentage in the highest levels of public service. Maclaren and Salahub (2012), however, argue that despite these attempts to promote gender equality, women still suffer from regular forms of violence, exploitation, and social marginalization. Hence, 514 women were assassinated in the first half of 2013 (*El Tiempo* 2013), leading Oxfam (2009) to suggest that violence against women, including sexual violence, is a weapon of war in Colombia.

## Political Structure Background

Colombia is a unitary republic in which central institutions have ultimate political and legal authority. The executive branch consists of the president, vice-president, 16 cabinet members, seven administrative departments, and 11 superintendents—each of them is ascribed to a ministry, for a total of about 230 public agencies (IADB 2004; Contraloría General de la República 2010). The Colombian legislature is bicameral. The senate has 102 members, 100 who are elected via the national districts and 2 targeted to indigenous persons. The House of Representatives consists of 168 elected members.<sup>2</sup> Colombian electoral laws have created strong personal, rather than party, vote-seeking incentives.<sup>3</sup> Because of this, multiple candidates from each party traditionally ran simultaneously in any given election, creating high levels of inter- and intraparty competition (Moreno 2005) in a system that is effectively a single, non-transferable-vote electoral system (Cox and Shugart 1995). This produced a pattern whereby legislators tended to favor targeted legislation and to de-emphasize national legislation (Avellaneda et al. 2012), leading Jones and Mainwaring (2003) to conclude that the Colombian party system is highly localized, rather than nationalized.

Until 1988, departments (states) and municipalities were subordinate to the central authority; The president appointed subnational leaders and could override mayors' and governors' actions (Avellaneda 2009). However, in 1983 (Law 14/83), Colombia embarked on a process of increasing fiscal decentralization, and in 1988, held the first mayoral and gubernatorial elections and legally adopted political decentralization (Law 78/86).

## Organizational-Administrative Culture

Since 1938, Colombia has undertaken several normative efforts to consolidate the civil service on a basis of merit and professionalization, but most of those efforts have been highly ineffective (Sanabria 2010). In fact, the Global Integrity indicators *de jure* (75 percent, or the maximum score) and *de facto* (55.6 percent) illustrate the gap between law and implementation that characterizes Colombian civil service. The civil service has long been at the forefront of political conflict in the country. During *La Violencia*, liberals and conservatives clashed over the allocation of public jobs (among other things) and control of the government payroll (Bushnell 2007). Since political patronage was common, each party developed strategies to ensure government control through the appointment of public servants. The process was highly costly for Colombia since all administrations had to start over each time there was a government change. The clashes finally ended during the National Front, as parties alternated power for sixteen years, coinciding with the first formal reform efforts to establish a merit-based civil service. Yet, those attempts were again unsuccessful.

The evolution of public sector bureaucracies in Colombia is characterized as a sequence of failed reform efforts during the second half of the twentieth century. Many of the 20 regulatory efforts between 1950 and 1990 that tried to emulate other countries' systems (France and the UK, in particular) were based on recommendations from international experts hired by the government. However, each set of reforms seeking to formalize the situation of public officials appointed through patronage—who made up the largest part of the public sector workforce (euphemistically termed “provisional”; Contraloría General de la República 2010)—was followed by poor implementation in the development of Colombian civil service (Sanabria 2010). Failure of civil service reforms mainly owed to pressure from political actors and interest groups, low administrative capacity, and the weak political will of successive governments to eradicate political patronage practices.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the first and second generations of reforms showed a more positive evolution. First-generation reforms, although not as comprehensive or aggressive as in other countries, aimed to modestly reduce the number of public agencies and ministries. The Betancourt (1982–1986) and Barco (1986–1990) administrations executed reform processes mainly in response to fiscal pressures and a profound international economic crisis. The greatest change took place during the Gaviria administration (1990–1994), with comprehensive market-oriented reforms in health and labor, privatization of some public utilities, and the sell-off of some public assets. Reform here was not ambitious in terms of civil service; however, the government created a significant number of new agencies in response to the enactment of the 1991 constitution. As a result, the country saw an increase in the number of public officials and agencies.

Later reforms have followed the second-generation profile, especially with loans and technical assistance of multilateral lenders such as the Inter-American Development Bank (2004). In fact, in 2002, the Uribe administration initiated an ambitious process of restructuring state institutions. Centralized in one office as part of the executive branch, the Programa de Renovación de la Administración Pública-PRAP had greater support this time among politicians. PRAP attempted to reduce the number of organizations (and not necessarily employees), merged ministries and public agencies, and privatized others. It also encouraged adoption of a merit standard for recruitment and promotion, and enhanced institutional and managerial environments within the civil service system. This led to the enactment of Law 909/2004, which provides the current civil service framework. This law aimed to provide the regulatory basis for a massive competitive process of recruitment for almost 120,000 positions, beginning in 2005. Although initially promising (over 650,000 Colombians registered to participate), a high number of positions remain unassigned to date. This was due to pressures from different political actors, helped by judicial sentences which, on due process grounds, hindered the dismissal of provisional workers who had passed the competitive entry tests.

Another feature that has hindered merit and professionalization in Colombia is the political decentralization process enacted during the 1980s. As a result, implementation of social policies, particularly in health and education, was devolved from the central government to municipalities and *departamentos* (Oszlak 2003). This procedure has possibly enhanced entrenched clientelist practices, especially in those regions with low institutional development.

Although the merit component has been less effective, Law 909 and PRAP have been more successful than any previous effort to define a formal structure for public personnel policies in Colombia. Constitutional provisions have deemed the National Commission of the Civil Service responsible for providing civil service policy guidelines and for the administration of the career system, and have strengthened the role of the Departamento Administrativo de la Función Pública (DAFP), charged with designing public personnel management policies. However, according to IADB (2004), practices such as evaluation linked to performance, the creation of an incentives policy, and greater flexibility for work mobility are still in the early stages of development.

## Changing Forces in the Training of Top Civil Servants

Among a number of change forces affecting Colombian public service are:

- the adoption of a new constitution in 1991,
- sustained economic development combined with high levels of poverty and income inequality,

- the presence of internal conflict and the poor presence of the state,
- the signing of international and free trade agreements and harmonization of norms,
- two decades of comprehensive state reforms, and
- the sociodemographic and educational advancement of the people.

The adoption of a progressive constitution in 1991 emerged from the demands of university students and the population itself, and provided a more active role for the state, compared to the highly conservative previous constitution. Moving to a constitution that defined the social rule of law as the basis of the nation implied new duties and demands for the Colombian government and called for the establishment of an independent and professional civil service.

The Colombian economy has consistently grown since the Great Depression, experiencing only one year of negative growth, in 1999. This trend has allowed the emergence of a diverse economy with a strong presence in commodities and primary goods, but also with certain level of sophistication in industry and services. On one hand, this diversification has demanded more sophisticated public goods and services from the state in terms of infrastructure, public utilities, and human capital. On the other hand, high levels of poverty and income inequality continue imposing greater demands on the amount and kinds of resources and services the government must provide. Nevertheless, given the prevailing internal conflict, traditional policy has concentrated high portions of the budget on defense and security issues, affecting the configuration of the higher echelons since there is strong demand for qualified people, not only for defense strategy, but also in conflict resolution and negotiation.

Signing international agreements in trade and political issues has also affected human capital management, particularly at the top (e.g., Free Trade Agreement with the United States in 2012, followed by treaties with Canada, Korea, the European Union, and others). Agreement details have also defined a new set of rules for the Colombian government in terms of expectations in the quality of services and enforcement of law. This has created new pressures for a more sophisticated competition and operation of the state. To that end, Colombia has recently begun lobbying the OECD to become a member, a process which comes with specific requirements for the quality of government services and human capital management.

Two other forces have affected the policies or training of top civil servants. The country has observed a rapid demographic growth accompanied by a strong urbanization process, making it the second most populated country in South America. This has come with greater educational advancement, mainly from the middle class. This has engendered a new generation of professionals who have populated state organizations so much so that there is a perceived change from a strong presence of lawyers to a more diversified

technocracy of economists, engineers, and physicians (Serres (2005) in Hernandez and Dueñas 2005). Although a comprehensive merit component has yet to be adopted, comprehensive reforms over the last two decades have implied certain advancements in public employment that have begun to define new strategies for attracting top officials (Sanabria 2010, 2012).

## **Expectations of Leaders and the Government**

To evaluate the expectation of leaders regarding senior civil servant training, we reviewed public documents, the national plan of development, handbooks of the DAFP,<sup>4</sup> and the websites of the main government agencies. We also analyzed the standard regarding top officials training in order to identify any recent changes. Additionally, we developed comprehensive, semistructured interviews with four individuals involved with training public servants. Specifically, we interviewed two top Colombian officials in charge of training topics—namely, the director of the main school of public administration in the country, ESAP,<sup>5</sup> and the director of a private school of government. The interviews were recorded and coded for this section.

In general, the interviews indicated that the training of civil servants in Colombia (1) is not part of the public agenda—although laws mandating training exist, implementation has been slow, (2) is not part of a comprehensive plan of skills and competencies required by senior civil servants and their organizations, (3) that time is a key variable that affects training opportunities for those at the top, and (4) that training for top officials is essentially self-obtained.

Attention is still lacking when it comes to implementing existing laws. National development plans for the past two governments have lacked specific training instructions for high level government officials. Interviewees argued that, although the 2004 and 2005 decrees gave the ESAP a more active role, implementation still requires attention from the top government itself and that “government leaders appear not to perceive yet the relevance and strategic value of training and educational programs for those at the top.”

The interviews did reveal singular efforts from some organizations to provide training to their top officials but these efforts appear to be disconnected from a general government strategy. For instance, three interviewees provided examples of organizations that offer educational alternatives to their top management. One interviewee commented that “when in place, the educational programs tend to respond more to the ideas or needs of the specific official rather than to the needs of the organization and to the government itself.” Thus, a comprehensive government strategy that promoted and standardized further training could be instrumental to the particular efforts of individuals and organizations.

Time was considered to be a difficulty to overcome when providing adequate training to top officials. One participant acknowledged that “the fact that most of the top officials are either politically appointed, or appointed without tenure as they can be dismissed, makes it hard to maintain a sustained strategy.” Restrictions in tenure and appointment, usually under four years, seem to make it difficult to motivate officials to take any training or educational programs. Another interviewee, also in charge of training programs, mentioned that “most training and educational programs tend to be better used by career officials than by those at the top. Since they remain in office for longer periods, they are better suited to take advantage”—that is, the electoral cycle seems to impose limitations in the learning processes of public organizations at the top.

Finally, interviewees were unanimous in that most top officials, when entering office, display high levels of education, generally at the graduate level, and the education itself is most often acquired at top international institutions. “This situation,” it was noted, “tends to make them reluctant to obtain further preparation even though they may need some particular training in national laws, budget and human capital management, decentralization, and other domestic aspects that are highly relevant for their time in office.” On the other hand, another interviewee mentioned that “in a country like Colombia, the overall sentiment was that most educational needs are felt at the lower rungs of the civil service, and it seemed to make more sense to focus educational efforts there” rather than on those individuals at the top that are usually highly educated and have received the best training a person can get.

## **Content and Method of Training of Top Civil Servants**

In reviewing documents and official information, we find that training top civil servants does not appear to be a strong agenda item in Colombia. A review of the political constitution indicates that merit is indeed the base of civil service provision of jobs, but it makes no reference to the top civil service. However, the constitution does establish education as a fundamental right of Colombians. Moreover, despite the signing of the Ibero-American Charter of Public Administration,<sup>6</sup> which included elements regarding the professionalization and training of civil servants, there is still room for advancement of a global strategy for the management of the higher echelons of government.

Moreover, the National Development Plan (NDP) 2010–2014 establishes that effective public management is a cornerstone of “Good Government,” a principle that the current Santos administration has defined as pivotal to state performance. The plan offers guidelines for improving public management through the use of different incentives. For instance, the NDP suggests symbolic inducements for top civil servants, such as the “National Prize of

High Management” for outstanding managers in the public sector. It also describes how the government has started to use training as an instrument to keep public servants up to date in skills and knowledge and to increase officials’ performance.

The NDP also reflects on how the government aims to adopt a new appreciation of public officials. A principle of public service vocation is mentioned for the first time in the document, and, more importantly, it involves training and learning as part of the strategy. The plan proposes that each public servant should improve her or his personal skills and competencies according to a proper assessment of their needs and performance. Every training plan must be addressed in the National Plan of Formation and Training for Public Servants (the Administrative Department of the Civil Service, DAFP, is responsible for this plan).

The National Plan states that the Higher School of Public Administration (ESAP) is responsible for designing an induction program for new senior officials through the School of High Government. According to the regulations, DAFP is responsible for designing an incentives system that includes training and learning strategy. The system describes benefits, such as formal education funding, for those public servants that show outstanding performance in office.

A review of norms regarding training for top officials (see Table 16.1) affirms that the last two Colombian governments have focused better attention on the professionalization of public sector management and have

*Table 16.1* Colombian normative regarding senior civil servants

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<b>Senior Executives and Top Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Law 909 Title VIII aims to introduce “Public Management Principles in the Administration. Art. 47 creates a new category of jobs called “Jobs of Managerial Nature.”</li> <li>– In this category are all jobs that are not matters of presidential appointment and some particular categories at the territorial level.</li> <li>– Art. 48 and Art. 49 state those positions are merit based and are mediated by the criteria of managerial responsibility; public managers will be evaluated on the grounds of efficiency and efficacy. The program considers the provision of incentives, although it does not clarify.</li> <li>– Art. 50 Management Agreements. This is probably the main feature of this new category. It states that, once selected, the public manager should establish with her/his superior the goals to be achieved during time in in office. Accordingly, a “management agreement” will be signed. The agreement should contain all expected results in terms of quantity and quality of goods or services, and a set of indicators to measure the achievement of goals. Three months after finishing the period of agreement, evaluation should be undertaken with the boss.</li> </ul>
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provided greater recognition to the role of top management in an effort to improve the effectiveness and efficiency. Still, specific policies addressing the needs of the senior civil service and public organizations are lacking. The primary regulation (Law 909/2004) provides only modest mention of performance agreements and measurement, and does not impart instruction on the training of top civil servants.

Initial training for top public officials began with the creation of the School of High Government, part of the training center of ESAP. Through Law 489/1998 (see Table 16.2), the national government established the center as a compulsory source of training, with elected mayors and governors attending the school before entering office. Other senior managers must also attend at the commencement of their jobs. According to ESAP (2012) and Portal de Alcaldes y Gobernadores de Colombia (n. a.), the induction course for elected officials includes topics such as (1) structure of the Colombian state and the national government; (2) relationships with

*Table 16.2* Norms regarding the training of Colombian senior officials

Name of the Legal issue	Relevant Aspects
Law 489/1998	Creates the School of High Government as an educational center for the training of the senior government officials. The Higher School of Public Administration (ESAP) and the Administrative Department of the Civil Service (DAFP) are responsible for developing and maintaining the School of High Government.
Decree 188/2004	Establishes different roles for the Administrative Department of the Civil Service (DAFP), which includes (1) design the curriculum for the School of High Government (in association with ESAP), (2) fill senior management positions through open competition.
Decree 219/2004	Establishes different roles for the Higher School of Public Administration (ESAP), including the responsibilities of the School of High Government.
Decree 2539/ 2005	Defines the work competencies for the public servants (hierarchically): (1) General competencies for all public servants: goal orientation, service delivery, transparency, compromise with the public organization. (2) Specific competencies for directives: leadership, planning, decision-making, direction and personnel development, knowledge of the environment.
Decree 1227/2005	Regulates Law 909/2004. It establishes that DAFP is responsible for training public managers, and its design is based on performance assessment.
Decree 2636/2005	Amends Decree 219/2004. Establishes the subdirection of high government.

subnational governments; (3) national development plan and governmental priorities; (4) sectorial review (minorities, safety, justice, gender and equity, victims and land restitution, and culture, among others); (5) disciplinary risk and control and monitoring agencies; (6) local public management; and (7) project management. The analysis of these contents indicates that the training tends to be informative rather than analytical and that it is limited in profundity and coverage of topics. Key topics and such operative skills as budgeting strategies, human capital management, and the like, still appear to be missing. Nonetheless, this seems to be an isolated effort that might require a more sustained strategy from the government for the top civil service, elected and appointed.

Subsequent rulings aimed to provide a more comprehensive framework and duties for the School of High Government as a pivotal institution in the training strategy of the senior government. Those changes (Table 16.2) assigned concrete curriculum design and educational program tasks to DAFP and ESAP for senior civil servants and defined some programs of training for high-level officials as compulsory. Nonetheless, the implementation of such regulations has been limited in the scope and profundity and training. Hence, DAFP documents (cartillas) indicate that senior civil servants do have further education opportunities while in office. Yet as the interviews revealed, there are elements (e.g., contents, untenured, electoral cycles, level of education, tight agendas, etc.) that refrain top officials from obtaining such training. In addition, the statistics in Figure 16.1 indicate that there have also been some courses directed to top senior managers, assumedly nonelected. Nonetheless, information is lacking about the contents and extent of such courses. Moreover, the data shows that this program has lost importance lately. In any case, these numbers show that there have been some efforts, particularly from ESAP, to fill the gap in the education of top public management.

### **Where Do Civil Servants Currently Receive Their Training?**

An inventory of the main private and public educational programs targeted for top officials and management is found in Appendix 16.1. We observe a growing array of programs in public management/affairs, but those intended for the senior managers are still uncommon. Both the ESAP and Universidad de los Andes are the sole institutions that have programs specifically addressing the needs of top officials, particularly at the national level. At the regional level, there are interesting efforts, particularly from Universidad de Antioquia which has a School of Public Affairs that offers an array of short training courses to public officials and top managers in the province of Antioquia. Also, a number of years ago, the Universidad Icesi in Cali developed a High Government Program for the municipality and recently created a Master in Government with an affirmative action component for Afro-Colombian

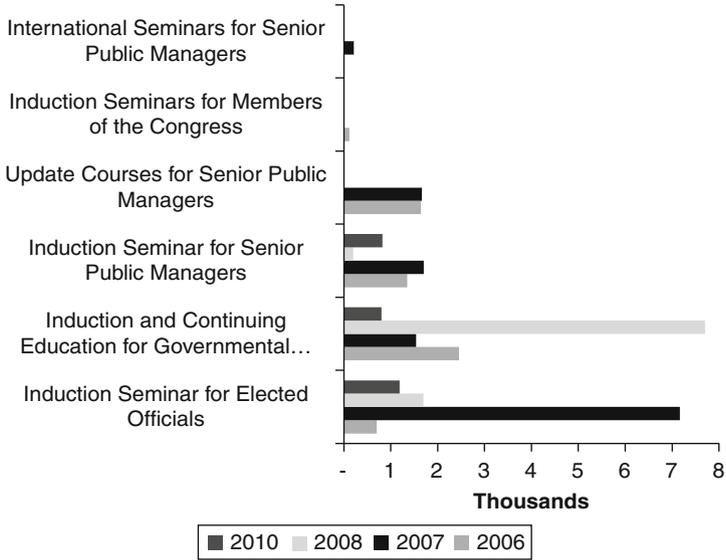


Figure 16.1 Number of top servants who received training from ESAP (Higher School of Public Administration).

Source: ESAP (2012).

leaders. The remaining programs are essentially masters in public administration/management/policy or government targeted to regular public officials with very high internal levels of diversity in content and foci.

One remarkable trait of Colombian civil service is that it is common for topmost officials in the national government to have acquired their graduate education in public affairs or other areas at top institutions abroad. In fact, an international graduate degree appears to constitute an important credential to become a top civil servant in the country (Sanabria 2012), explaining why most top servants fail to take advantage of the extant training opportunities.

Consistent with interviewee testimony is the need to reposition and utilize the potential of ESAP as the provider of training programs for the top civil service. Our research indicated that top managers tend to attend the same four or five (essentially private) Colombian universities for degrees before continuing their training abroad. To date, graduates of ESAP in the higher echelons of government are rare, as internal studies of ESAP (Careaga, Sanabria, and Caballero 2012) have shown. Nonetheless, one respondent argued that this practice has started to wane in the last several years, as there is now greater diversity in terms of undergraduate institutions attended by top civil servants.

At the subnational level, the lack of training programs for top government officials is more evident than at the national level. According to one interviewee, "There is greater variation in the levels of education—from high school to graduate degrees—between mayors and governors. This may stem from a belief that elected officials, politicians, and top managers in small towns and provinces do not necessarily value credentials as they do in Bogota. Instead, they may place more emphasis on leaders' commitment over expertise and knowledge." Apart from efforts by some of the most developed provinces (Antioquia, Valle, Distrito Capital de Bogotá), provincial or municipal programs for the senior civil service are almost nonexistent. As governor of the state (department) of Norte de Santander, Edgar Diaz, stated, "Our current top servants think that the skills learned 30 years ago are still applicable to manage the changing demands of government now."<sup>7</sup> In sum, a more sustained and overarching central strategy can help subnational governments to enhance their institutional capacity through focused training of their top civil servants.

## Conclusion

Although in the last decade Colombia has experienced relative political and economic stability, the government still faces critical security and social issues, a high level of poverty, and remains the second most unequal country in Latin America. Colombia has undertaken several normative efforts since 1938 to consolidate the civil service on a basis of merit and professionalization, but low administrative capacity and weak political will have impeded progress (Sanabria 2010). Law 489 (in 1998) and subsequent decrees (in 2004 and 2005) establish the norms regarding the training of Colombian senior officials. Specifically, it created the School of High Government as a training and education center for senior elite. The Higher School of Public Administration (ESAP) and the Administrative Department of the Civil Service (DAFP) are responsible for developing and maintaining the School of High Government. Elected mayors, governors, and other senior managers must attend the School of Government before they take office. Nonetheless, the implementation of these requirements has been limited.

In 2002, Colombia initiated an ambitious process of restructuring state institutions and encouraged the adoption of merit in recruitment and promotion, which eventually led to Law 909/2004, providing the current normative framework of the civil service. This law regulated the National Commission of the Civil Service—responsible for providing policy guidelines related to civil service and the administration of the career system, and strengthened the role of the Departamento Administrativo de la Función Pública (DAFP)—the agency in charge of designing the policies of public personnel management.

Although Law 909/2004 introduces standards regarding senior civil servants through the “Public Management Principles in the Administration” and creates the category Jobs of Managerial Nature, documents and official information confirm that senior civil servant training remains lackluster. Moreover, political pressures continue hindering the evolution of civil service toward merit and professionalization. Of late, however, domestic and international forces have opened the door to incentives for public managers and other civil servants to receive more professional training. Still, it is the tenured-low level official that seems more motivated in taking advantage of training.

Finally, interviews with individuals involved with public servant training suggest it is neither part of the public agenda nor part of a comprehensive plan of required skills and competencies. Given this, top officials pay for their own education, acquired through graduate education in public affairs or other areas at top foreign institutions. But this type of education is not mirrored at the subnational level where training is needed to provide skills to municipal and provincial civil servants, perhaps due to fewer technical and financial resources to design and fund such programs. Although the government has defined a compulsory short training before mayors and governors take office, interviews indicate the need for a more sustained effort to ensure they gain stronger skills in light of the enormous disparity of education and administrative skills at the subnational level.

## Notes

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1. Artículo 22, Law 5 of 199.
2. Two representatives from each of the 32 departments and capital district and one more representative for each 250,000 habitants in each political subdivision. Five more representatives are elected in special districts to favor minorities.
3. Avelleneda and Escobar-Lemmon (2012) illustrate the low profile that parties have in candidates' victory. Results from their survey of 120 Colombian mayors indicate that regardless of parties' financial or logistic support campaigns, Colombian mayors give no credit to their parties for their victory.
4. DAFP is the main government agency in charge of human capital management policies for public organizations, and its acronym in Spanish stands for Administrative Department of Public Function.
5. ESAP, according to its Spanish acronym, stands for Higher School of Public Administration.
6. Some of the charter's recommendations were included in Law 909/2004 and some subsequent decrees.
7. Personal interview by one of the authors, December 27, 2013.

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*Appendix 16.1* Inventory of existing educational programs suitable to top management

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Program</b>
Academia Diplomática de San Carlos	Master in Analysis of Political, Economic and International Contemporary Problems
Corporación Universitaria Empresarial de Salamanca	Diploma Degree in Public Management
ESAP	Graduate Program in Public Management
	Graduate Program in Social Management
	Graduate Program in Contemporary Public Administration
	Graduate Program in Public Finances
	Graduate Program in Hospital Management
	Graduate Program in High State Direction

(Continued)

## Appendix 16.1 Continued

Institution	Program
Goberna América Latina Pontificia Universidad Javeriana (Bogotá)	Master in High Public Direction Graduate Program in Government and Public Management in Territories Master in Urban and Regional Planning
Pontificia Universidad Bolívariana	Graduate Program in Public Management
Universidad de Antioquia – Escuela de Políticas Públicas de Antioquia	Short educational programs for top officials at the municipal and province level.
Universidad de Medellín	Graduate Program in Urban Management Graduate Program in Senior Management Graduate Program in Public Management Master in Government
Universidad del Cauca	Graduate Program in Government and Public Policy
Universidad de Santander	Graduate Program in Public Management
Universidad del Norte	Master in Public Management and Government
Universidad del Rosario	Graduate Program in Public Health Management
Universidad del Valle	Graduate Program in Public Administration Master in Public Policy
Universidad de los Andes – Alberto Lleras Camargo School of Government	High Government Program Master in Public Policy
Universidad EAFIT	Master in Government and Public Policy
Universidad Externado	Graduate Program in Government, Management and Public Affairs Master in Government and Public Policy
Universidad Icesi	Master in Government Executive Program in High Municipal Government
Universidad Industrial de Santander	Graduate Program in Public Management
Universidad Nacional de Colombia – Bogotá and Medellín	Graduate Program in Public Policy